

- /Claim 3, line 1, change "claims 1 and/or 2" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 5, line 1, change "claims 3 and/or 4" to --claim 3--.
- /Claim 6, line 1, change "at least ... to 5" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 7, line 1, change "at least ... to 6" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 8, line 1, change "at least ... to 7" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 9, line 1, change "at least ... to 8" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 10, line 1, change "at least ... to 9" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 11, line 1, change "at least ... to 10" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 12, line 1, change "at least ... to 11" to --claim 1--.
- /Claim 13, line 1, change "at least ... to 11" to --claim 1--.

REMARKS

By this Preliminary Amendment, the multiple dependency of some of the claims has been removed so as to avoid the surcharge associated therewith. Claim 1 has been amended by inserting "without the need to recur to hypotheses". This amendment corresponds to the amendment in the international application.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS, Washington, D.C. 20231, on February 12, 1999.

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